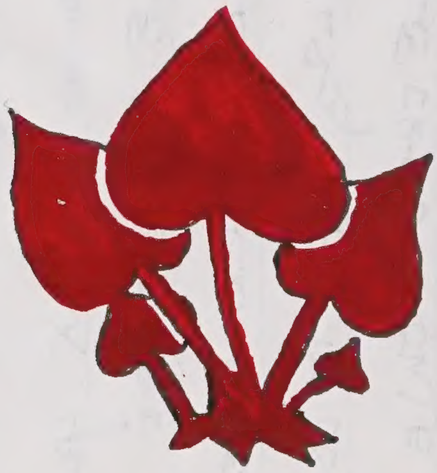
FOR FLYER

1



The Lifting Team

I, in the hospital and in great pain
from broken bones after an accident,
I had to be lifted – bed to
gurney, gurney to X-ray table ([illegible]
Lord) table to chair,
and rolled back by the Lifting Team:
Shannon, built like a football player, Mario, Amelia, Jules,
they never hurt me in the slightest
~~as I~~ as they held me in their firm cocoon,
and Shannon would say
(seeing the tenseness of fear in my face)
"Don't worry, you'll be alright."
When in death's last oblivion, I will send for the L.T.
they will arrive as angels
at my bedside
~~and they will~~ hold my ghostly bones – drive
into Hell and Shannon will say, "Don't
worry, you'll be alright" and they
will lift me up, up high up
into the pearly gates.

USA 55
Justin S. Morrill
LAND GRANT COLLEGES

rick Ohlsson & Bob [illegible]
3628 16th Street
San Francisco CA 94114

The Flood Building
870 Market
Suite 919
San Francisco CA
94102
SEASONAL STRATEGY

The Lifting Team

~~[illegible]~~ In the hospital ward in great pain
from broken bones ~~from~~ after an accident,
I ~~wanted~~ had to be lifted —
bed to gurney, gurney to
X-ray-table (brutally hard) table
to chair and so they sent for
the Lifting Team — Solomon, built
like a football player and
Kevin, smaller, agile, a
rugby lad. They never hurt ~~me yet once~~
they held me [illegible] awesome
~~in the slightest~~ as Solomon
would say, seeing the tenseness of fear
of my face, was "Don't worry, you'll be
alright."
When in death's last dementia, I will send for the L.T.
they will arrive as angels at my
bedside, halt my ghostly rage — drive
into Hell ~~and~~ lift me up, up, and S will say "Don't worry", you'll be alright
high up into the stunning fields of stars.

Action

Keep figures
Call lawyer for clarity
Prayer for Reni
Call Rumi.

6,400.

3,200.
1700
1500

3200
2500
$\boxed{700.}$

Month Figures.

Sunday Travel Center
Air fare to NYC.

Talk to ADs
about Clan.

Resign.

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in 2026 with funding from
CLIR DHC Grant 2026-2028

https://archive.org/details/GLC67-0003

Job Action Plan
One phone call a day.
Call Cal State Hayward -
Notebook
for numbers.

Call. UC Extension

Vision Job
Syllabus.

The Bird Watcher

(for Roger Webster
1940-1970)

You saw
Two red chips
fluttering in the apple blossom
through your binoculars —
two Cardinals —
rare in those parts —
you were so excited
you leapt a fence — (some gate
half rotted, which gave way)
under you like soft butter
and flung you backwards on
the meadow grass
and nodding wild flowers.
Your friend
white with fright
stood over you
giant-like laughing
"Get up! Get up Roger,
Stop fooling around"
But you couldn't move.
You never walked again.
never ran in pursuit of birds again.
~~It was your room~~
but you still had an eye for them
I remember in the garden
of the Rehab where I met you.
You could recognize the grey finches
by the number of stripes on their wings
You still had an eye for women
too. You flirted with the Danish
nurses. You were bawdy.

"Better hurry up now
I got an erection. It's involuntary
So you better take advantage of it
while you can.
How I would laugh and blush.
You were handsome—
those strong cheeks
and flashing green eyes,
elegant and gentle in
your manners.
I still curse the girl
you were engaged to,
who left you after the accident.
She lost a good man.
Once more proposed to you.
You turned her down.
"I didn't want to be a burden
to her," you said.
"You'd be no burden, Roger.
You were light
and kind,
You had a big heart.
On the record player
You'd play Rubinstein
playing the Moonlight Sonata.
Every time you'd get tears in
your eyes.
Your father was a bird fancier.
He spent so much on his birds
he couldn't afford to build
a ground floor room for you.
I didn't know it then
but you were the first man I truly

Loved - not from a distance but from
close to.
One afternoon in the Roy Room
surrounded by geraniums
and their peppery scent
as we listened to Proud Haven
I asked you if you ~~could feel~~ had
feelings in your arms.
I ran my finger up and down
the long blond hair on your arm.
"Can't feel a thing" he said sadly.
They encouraged you at the rehab
to get a special car,
look for work
but you had given up
on life. I didn't know the word
"depression" then but you had it. I guess.
You never received the
kidney by-pass op.
Your mother said you'd given up.
I lost you, within months-
I still miss those letters
signed "always your friend".
You were my first true adult friend
Roger. I too watched birds - I
still love their lightness their freedom
like you I will always be
a watcher of skies
watcher of birds

Managing Pain

So far as I know, there is no reason to believe that people with OI feel pain more acutely than anyone else. The pain from a fracture is usually acute for a while, then quite quickly subsides once the bone is set and the cast or splint is in place. Since we break bones much more frequently than the average person, we experience more pain. It's not chronic pain though, it's pain resulting from trauma. Naturally the fear of pain, as much, if not more, than the breaking of the bones, ~~the torment of~~ is always with me, ~~haunts me~~. Sometimes I lie awake at night and shudder when I think of all the fractures, all the pain I've experienced.

Hospital staff can often be callous. Once when I had broken my pelvis, a nurse in England told me not to "cry like a baby" when she put me on the bed pan. In fact crying, and screaming, are natural healthy responses and help to lessen the pain. The worst pain I have ever experienced — agony really — was when I broke my left hip. In Queens General, the radiologist, an Anglo-Indian man brought up [illegible] in the British stiff-upper-lip tradition told me I was behaving like a baby when I screamed with pain as he moved my hip to X-ray it. "Fuck you!" I said. "You must act like a man and tough it out," he said. "I am and I do," I said, "And screaming doesn't mean I'm not or I don't. I can't help it," I yelled, "if you'd broken your hip, you'd scream too." "No, I wouldn't," he said. "You're crazy," I said. Crazy and unfeeling. He finally calmed me down, so that I stopped screaming. We shook hands, "Women," He thought I had agreed with him. I ~~humored~~ was simply placating him to get him off my case. I wanted to get back to the stillness and peace of my hospital bed.

Later in St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan (at 59th St.) I was treated with equal callousness. A technician came to weigh me. He was about to pick me up wholesale and plunk me down in a hammock-like contraption. I pleaded with him not to touch me. As he made a move to pick me up, ~~the~~ my fear and tension in my muscles caused large muscle spasms. I could hear the bones clicking against each other. I screamed so loud and called for help that I was rescued by a nurse who had to explain to the technician that I was in too much pain to be weighed today. Why my weight was important at this point I don't have a clue. I suppose these callous types simply can't handle the sound of screaming. Looking back I should have reported these saints incidents to the respective hospital authorities. I wonder what Florence Nightingale would have said to such callous brutes? I wonder how long they would have lasted at the Front in World War the One or in the Crimea?

I live almost constantly with the fear of being struck with pain. I suspect~~ed~~ I have post traumatic stress, If it's cumulative stress from all the accidents and whacks I have had, it's no wonder I drink alcoholically. Perhaps I need my ~~pains~~. NO. I just need to be careful. After the hip accident, I have vowed to tell hospital staff in the future whenever I have fractures that I'll be screaming whenever and as long as I can. and they will just have to put up with it. I after all am the one with the pain. It's my pain. I'll deal with it ~~as well as I can~~ the way I want and as best I can. Empathy is a quality sadly lacking in hospital staff. I name the hospitals I was so mistreated in — Queens General and Roosevelt St. Luke's because they should be blamed for bad care of their patients. I wish I had taken down the names of the staff who mistreated me, I would write them down here. If they can't bear to see people in pain, what are they doing working in a hospital?

I often wonder
if I
am I a
- wino -

M

Party

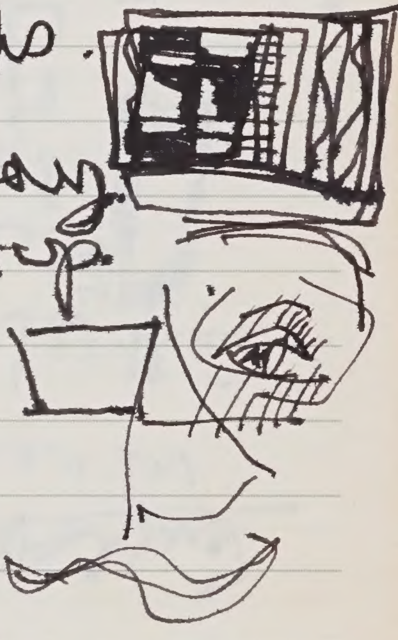
Role ofts.

½ hr

RSVP. list to
Newfour.

Oct 11-13 Asilomar Retreat

Pack away
stuff from desktops.
Staff Meeting all day
Field trips set up.



Rel./Needs.
what they need
want to What goods
Can you walk away?

Knowledge of business

Employee Rels.

We need: open. listening. Honest.

Sell ourselves.

Focus on what they do.

have to talk about it.

Thank supporters

Who else do you know?

Who else can I talk with?

Assignments
Mind
Where
listed
Questions
to elicit
further info.

Either or Question

Dates.

Learn more about your business. A.D. Attracting

Steady stream Quality candidates

Consultation or Accommodations

open questions.

P.26.

Open ended questions to get an employee to talk about their questions.

(other orgs. - Dis Act.
concerned about requirements
not
dating questions.

11. The old lady's parrot
learned to mimick her clock.
Long after it broke,
he was still chiming;
then the old lady died,
the parrot died,
and there was silence.

12. The heron thinks he hears
his mate call to him in the valley.
He flies down to find her:
he will be disappointed;
he's heard only the echo
of his own song.

~~The reeds chatter in the wind~~
~~like gossiping wives.~~
~~They tell of the marriage~~
~~of moonbeams,~~
~~the moon's temptation~~
~~the philosophy~~

They tell of the secrets
of moonbeams,
the discoveries
of sunlight.
The philosophy
of stars.

11. The old lady's parrot
mimicked her clock.
Long after it broke,
he was still chiming.
Then the old lady died.
Then the parrot died.
Then there was silence

12 The heron thinks he hears
his mate call in the valley.
He flies down to find her.
He will be disappointed.
He has heard only the echo
of his own song.

1. A sudden rain shower:
a ~~b~~million cylinders of glass,
fracturing, turn the road
into a xylophone!

2. The cat hisses,
bares its fangs;
for what?
only a ginkgo leaf
falling in morning mist.

3. The monastery's perched on a mountain top.
Despite the view,
the monks look up,
not down.

4. The white hare dozes in dawn light.
Don't be fooled.
His body's a coiled spring.
Watch him leap into morning
in a whoosh of snow!

~~(For Ev~~

~~The lake's a sheet of glass.~~
The fisherman's giving up hope
when he gets a bite.
and the boat tilts.
will he fall in? No, he's a professional
and besides he's hungry.

The white hare dozes in dawn light
Don't be fooled. His mind's a stop watch
~~ready to chime~~, his body a coiled spring
~~ready to snap~~. Watch him leap ~~off~~ away into
morning in a shroud of snow!

The rain shower comes ~~on~~ down
~~like~~ a sudden as the drop of a bamboo blinds.
~~a~~ million fracturing cylinders of glass,
~~fracturing on the window~~ turn
the sidewalk into a xylophone!

The cat purrs
Shows its fangs; for what?
Only a ginkgo leaf falling
in ~~the~~ morning mist.

The monastery's perched on ~~the rock~~ mountain top.
~~like an eagle on its nest.~~
~~Despite the view~~ Despite the view
The monks look up not down

THE JAMES WHITE
REVIEW

357 Turk St.
#707
San Francisco
Ca. 94102

Dear

As guest poetry editor of the forthcoming San Francisco Winter Issue of the James White Review, I would like to write you to send me some of your poems for possible publication.

You may ~~send up to~~ send up to five poems — any subject or style and no longer than twenty lines in length. Please include s.a.s.e. I look forward to reading your work.

Sincerely,

Christopher Hewitt

Eight poems written after seeing the paintings of T'ao-chi

A sudden
1. ~~The~~ rain shower
~~sudden as the drop of bamboo blinds.~~
a million of cylinders of glass,
fracturing
turn the ~~pavement~~ roof
like a xylophone!

Clouds at sunset
Streaked blood-red.
Reminds you of our own
brothers dead in the war,
say the locals;
"Isn't it romantic,"
Say the tourists,
taking snapshots
from the old stone bridge

Clouds at sunset streaked blood-red.
"Reminds you of our brothers dead in the war,
us of soldiers who gave their lives for us.
Say the locals.
"Isn't it romantic?" say the tourists
Taking snapshots from the old stone bridge

Clouds at sunset streaked blood-red.
Reminds us of soldiers who gave their lives for us.
Isn't it romantic!" say the tourists
Taking snapshots from the old stone bridge

TEN POEMS WRITTEN AFTER SEEING THE PAINTINGS OF T'AO-CHI

Prelude

Here we only watch and dream:
each morning's spring,
each summer, afternoon.
At midnight, the year turns;
moonlight strikes the mountain's peak
and migrant birds fly south.

~~1.~~ 96
A sudden rain shower:
a million cylinders of glass
fracturing
turn the road into a xylophone!

~~7~~ ~~2.~~ 4
The cat hisses,
bares its fangs —
For what?
Only a ginkgo leaf
falling in the ~~morning~~ mist.

5 ~~3.~~
The fisherman's giving up hope
when he gets a bite.
His little boat tilts;
will he fall in?
No, he's a professional,
and besides, he's hungry!

1 ~~4.~~
The air is white ash.
A bird flies into it
like a broken fig leaf;
its cry is 'Love gone-by,
Love gone-by...'

~~8~~ 2 ~~5.~~
The white hare dozes in dawn light.
Don't be fooled. His body's a coiled
spring —
Watch him leap into the morning
in a whoosh of snow!

3 ~~6.~~
The bamboo fronds seem to be moving,
there's no wind or rain;
it's their business to appear busy,
to flutter with the joy of giving green.

~~7.~~ 9
The huddle of old men
are so busy arguing philosophy
they don't see the grandeur above them.
The willow trees mock them,
laughing in the wind
like irreverent children.

8.
Heavy the blue evening on the irises;
they don't even look up
as I pass; they are in deep thought—
they are the evening's concubines,
so dedicated to their duties, almost too
lovely to be seen.

9.
The monastery's perched on
a mountain top.
Despite the view,
the monks look up
not down.

10.
The rock is blessed
with a rainbow across it
like the hand of God;
you can't separate rock from rainbow,
or the poet from his longing.

Mightier than the Mouth

When I was drinking, I was what could be called a "mouth on wheels."

I would "hold court" at the Café Flore in San Francisco in the late seventies. I was, by all accounts, very entertaining. I did impressions, told funny stories, often at other people's expense. Whom I see now as the King (or should I say queen!) of the Café was a very frightened lonely person, trying to deflect attention from his disability (and small stature) by being fabulously witty and brilliant (or so I thought. ~~Now I talk a lot less.~~ I kept people ~~close~~ always around me, but not too close, lest they should see any of the pain I felt inside, the pain which I was medicating with booze on a daily basis (often alone in a dingy bar in the Castro far from the café). These days I talk

TEN POEMS WRITTEN AFTER SEEING THE PAINTINGS OF T'AO-CHI

Prelude

Here we only [illegible] dream,
each morning's spring,
each summer, afternoon.
At midnight, the year turns,
moon[illegible] the mountain peak,
and migrant birds fly south.

1
A sudden rain shower,
a million [illegible] of glass
[illegible]
[illegible] a symphony.

2
[illegible]
[illegible] fishes
[illegible]
For what?
[illegible]
falling in the morning mist.

3
The fisherman [illegible] hope
when he gets a bite.
His little boat tilts,
will he fall in?
No, he's a professional,
and besides, he's hungry!

4
The air is [illegible],
a bird [illegible]
like a [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] gone by.

5
The wind [illegible]
Don't be fooled! His body's a coiled
spring.
Watch him leap into the morning
in a [illegible].

6
The bamboo fronds seem to be moving,
they [illegible] of rain;
it's their business to appear busy,
together with the joy of giving green.

7
The builders [illegible] men
are so [illegible]
they don't see the grandeur above them.
[illegible] them
laughing in the wind
like irreverent children.

8
Heavy the blue evening on the [illegible];
they don't even look up
as I pass; they are in deep thought—
[illegible] the evening's [illegible],
[illegible] almost too
[illegible] to be [illegible].

9
This monastery's perched on
a mountaintop.
Despite the view
the monks look up
[illegible]

10
The rock is blessed
by a rainbow [illegible]
like the hand of God;
you can't separate the rock from the rainbow
or the poet from his longing.

a lot less. My goal is to write more than I speak, a tall order for a chatterbox like me. Thanks to being sober for many years, and ~~de~~ practicing intensive meditation for several, I have calmed down a lot, slowed down and am able to rein in my compulsive showing off. (I am no longer a "rolling resumé").

During my drinking years my poems were clever and abstract. I never talked about my disability or talked about my feelings. I cringe now when I remember speaking of other disabled poets who wrote honestly about themselves, as writing "sentimental, self-pitying crap." I speak more about myself through ~~my writing than~~ with my pen these days than with my mouth and I use my resumé to get jobs rather than to impress ~~pe~~ friends and acquaintances.

However, occasionally I find myself slipping back into my

old "queen of the café couture."

Recently I went on two dates with two different guys. The first was a professional musician. Because I felt intimidated by his impressive array of degrees and talent, I found myself doing my "rolling résumé routine" once again. I realized afterwards that I had overwhelmed him with a torrent of words - all about me! Not surprisingly he did not express a desire to see me again.

The second date was with a meteorologist (weatherman). Because he wasn't a fellow (implicitly rival) artist I didn't feel so intimidated by him as date number one; I had also learned from my experience on the previous date. I asked the weatherman questions about his career and he asked me questions about mine. I did not lapse into [illegible] cruel (if accurate) impressions of some of today's well known poets as I had with the musician. His response to my new poems

second date was a mutual exchange. I had a better time than with date number one. The weatherman had a good time too. In fact, he asked me out again, thus validating my new policy of self-restraint.

Sometimes though, on a "contact high" ~~at a party~~" from the other guests at a party, I can turn on the wit and funny stories I can tell now when it's appropriate to play the entertainer."

I used to be a character who wrote very little. Now I am less of a character, who writes a lot more. I try to put my complete and adequate disabled gay self into my work. In public I no longer try to be the "guy you won't mind is disabled because he is such a card isn't he?"

I have learned from the overwhelmingly positive response to my new poems

and the chapters of this book that have been published recently that I am respected more as a writer because I speak from the heart, I am loved by my good friends ~~because I am~~ Incidentally for being the real me and not just admired as an entertainer about whom they know nothing except that he's clever and witty. We can take turns in being the entertainer: "Tell me another one willya?"

Preface

What you will find in the ensuing pages is far from a conventional biography beginning with birth and proceeding to the present, rather it is a collage of meditative poems and essays in which I have explored and [illegible] personally on the people, places and experiences which have shaped my life. I include often, at random, the ideas or themes [illegible] that suggest themselves to me. Later I pieced them loosely to form what I hope is a complete [illegible]-portrait.

C.H. San Francisco
2000

Preface

What you will find in the ensuing pages is far from a conventional biography, beginning with birth and proceeding to the present; rather it is a collage of narrative, poems and essays in which I have explored as honestly as I can the people, places and experiences which have shaped my life. I wrote often, at random as ideas or scenes presented themselves to me. Later I pieced them together to form what I hope is a complete self-portrait.

C.H. San Francisco,
2000.

Preface

What you will find in the
ensuing pages is a form of
cumulative biography beginning
with birth and proceeding to the
present; letters to a college for
meditative poems and essays
in which I have explored as
clearly as I can the people
places and experiences which have
shaped my life. I wrote often
at random as ideas or themes
presented themselves to me.
Later I pulled them together
to form what I hope is a
complete self-portrait.

C.H. San Francisco
2000.

Denial

People are standing all around me,
I'm not among them,
Because, if I could stand
the top of their heads would
only reach their shoulders,
then I would not just know
but feel how small I am.

I prefer to get around in
my motorized wheelchair
that way I am "the equal"
of others in chairs — "We're all
sitting ones we?"
But I don't stop the
staring of the walking folks,
I'm ~~at~~ still a little person in chair
It's my littleness that attracts their
most curiosity. Can he have sex
they wonder, Is it possible to get,
If he ~~can~~ could have sex, wouldn't he
be crushed by the other person.

They huddled uncertainly, hesitated to think about and settle for a [illegible] [illegible], putting masks, some even cross themselves. Their [illegible] forth groans of dread. Some of them laughing uneasily, remembering that [illegible], Honey, [illegible] the kids.

I tried to walk over, using ~~[illegible]~~ improvised crutches made of wood by other soldiers or given me [illegible] neighbours, thereby using another [illegible] by the state. But as I looked down at the ground, I began to shake so violently, I almost fell several times and for the following [illegible] can be [illegible] — a broken back, [illegible] shell [illegible] might [illegible]. My chair is my [illegible] made [illegible] — meaning [illegible] [illegible], my [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] in

The Miracle that Moment—

When I arrived home in '99

My mother gave a wild
shout of joy "Chris!"
And though bent [illegible]
My little mother she seemed
to [illegible] in ~~[illegible]~~ her armchair
She was as astonished and thrilled
As if looking out the bedroom window
In a child [illegible] seen the garden
flowers in [illegible] it was still the
same garden, [illegible]
[illegible] unexpected
burst out into summer bloom
straight from its [illegible] of winter roses

[illegible]

beautiful
as if without warning
as if a miracle had taken place
as if ~~[illegible]~~ itself I didn't put things
but [illegible]
As if suddenly I had changed
from the child [illegible] of the [illegible] [illegible]
into the man she'd always hoped I'd become.

the first-born
that she loved
so hard
[illegible]

320/330 CLEMENTINA STREET
ATTN: ALL RESIDENTS

With immediate effect, the building management has been assigned to:

Property Office : 320 Clementina Street #102
Property Manager : William Chung 904-7602
Administrative Clerk : Marieta Oquendo 904-7600
Resident Custodian : Eddy Lo 896-6810 (320 Bldg)
Mario Guzman 348-0730 (330 Bldg)
Social Worker : Chris So 931-0412

MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS 715-3100
EMERGENCY AFTER OFFICE HOURS: 715-3100
District #3 Office at 1010 Webster Street : 929-5600

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

320/330 CLEMENTINA STREET
全體住客注意

立刻有效，樓宇管理已委派給：

樓宇辦公室 : 320 Clementina Street #102
樓宇經理 : William Chung 904-7602
管理職員 : Marieta Oquendo 904-7600
住客清潔工人 : Eddy Lo 896-6810(320大廈)
Mario Guzman 348-0730 (330大廈)
社會工作員 : Chris So 931-0412

維修問題 : 715-3100
辦公時間後緊急 : 715-3100
第#3分區辦公室在 1010 Webster Street : 929-5600

多謝你對這事情的專注。

320/330 CLEMENTINA STREET
ВНИМАНИЮ ВСЕХ ЖИЛЬЦОВ

ДЛЯ БЫСТРОГО РЕШЕНИЯ ВАШИХ ПРОБЛЕМ ВЫ МОЖЕТЕ ОБРАТИТЬСЯ К УПРАВЛЕНИЮ ДОМА:

ОФИС СОБСТВЕННОСТИ: 320 CLEMENTINA STREET, #102
МЕНЕДЖЕР СОБСТВЕННОСТИ: WILLIAM CHUNG 904-7602
АДМИНИСТРАТИВНЫЙ КЛЕРК: MARIETA OQUENDO 904-7600
РАБОТНИК ПО УХОДУ ЗА ДОМОМ: EDDY LO 896-6810 (320 BLDG)
MARIO GUZMAN (348-0730 (330 BLDG)

РАБОТНИК СОЦИАЛЬНОГО ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЯ: CHRIS SO 931-0412

ПРОБЛЕМЫ ТЕХНИЧЕСКОГО ОБСЛУЖИВАНИЯ: 715-3100
АВАРИЙНЫЕ СИТУАЦИИ ВНЕ РАБОЧЕГО ВРЕМЕНИ: 715-3100
DISTRICT #3 OFFICE AT 1010 WEBSTER STREET. 929-5600

СПАСИБО ЗА ВАШЕ ВНИМАНИЕ К ДАННОМУ ВОПРОСУ.

УПРАВЛЕНИЕ

The Window Cleaner

He is quiet, calm
methodical: blurring
with a soapy sponge
the vision and wiping it off
with the rubber strip on a handle:
Clear blue sky emerges
like some Magritte painting
Chimneys, rooftops ~~[illegible]~~ shoot up unmoored
red and grey contours outlines
crisp and clear.
"Now you see things
as they really are," he
says, turning to us, smiling,
proud of his hardy work.
But do we see things
as they are? We think.
A Is the window only a dream, Is he giving us a service really?
for viewing
framed? We are less likely
to go out now ~~and just out~~
content with this blinding
clear ~~view~~ vision, our dream frozen
while our lives putter on safely
inside.

The Waiter

His smile is electric
on off on off
on with the customers
off in the kitchen
frantic with the cook
he snaps "Hurry up
I've got 3 tables empty
waiting"
He trips. He ~~w~~ almost
drops the tray of the
entrée du jour.
Red snapper
Hurries off from the kitchen
"I'll show them red snapper
~~He~~ shoves the glistening food
wrestles in the conversational
scene ~~at~~ into each face coming
so they almost have to duck
before he slides each plate down
I mustn't lose it, I mustn't lose it.
Just because these folks are from
I show any weird tip.
I feel like ~~a~~ the first stage of a
recycling machine. The food goes
in. They digest it. Stand in line
for the restroom. I hear the toilet flush

Their shit goes in the sewer,
into the ocean with it.
Red snapper eat it, are caught,
in nets shipped to the restaurants
cooked on a charcoal stove
slapped onto the plate
Etc, etc, etc. Luis
Hernandez "Anything else
for you today ladies?"
No thank you they say
"young man, gracias," they
leave him a ten dollar tip!
"Wonders will never cease"
he thinks.
Thanks you ladies, Have a
good day he throws over
his shoulder, [illegible]
through the swinging doors
into the kitchen to take
a break.

Acting Out by Christopher Hewitt

I am a minority within a minority within a minority. I am ~~disabled~~ "severely disabled" and gay. I am a little over three feet tall and when outside get around in a wheelchair since the age of nine. I am an "alien" in more ways than one. I grew up in England and emigrated here in 1974 to go to graduate school at UC Davis. Ostensibly I came to get an M.A. in English. I had always wanted to be a writer but hardly ever written. At U.C. I found I could get credit for writing poems – unthinkable in England. So my M.A. was in English but with emphasis on creative writing. Having graduated from UC in 1976, I was accepted into the Creative Writing program at S.F. State. It wasn't till I was at State that I came out of the closet. Visiting Davis just after I graduated I came out to an English friend (we'll call her Judy) ~~who~~ who had won the same scholarship as I to study at UC on an Exchange program from Birmingham University. When I told her I was gay she responded by saying "Are you sure you're not doing this just to be fashionable?" I was deeply hurt and offended. Being English of course I was quietly passive in my response and said through clenched teeth "No I've thought about it a great deal." I never spoke to her again. Thank God times have changed immensely. Now I'm sure she would have responded more warmly. When I went home to England in 1980 I came out to all my former college friends. Most of them weren't the least bit surprised. They even congratulated me in fact. In San Francisco I lived in the Castro. Here I was in the Gay Mecca, surrounded by my everything. But because of my disability and my ugliness I was painfully shy around gay men, especially those to whom I was attracted ~~to~~. On January first 1981 I decided I was going to get drunk every night for six weeks and hit the castro bars and GET LAID. Well I certainly took men home. But I was so drunk (and so unattractive) they

Acting Out: an Essay by Charlotte Hewitt

usually we never got to the sex. This is the main reason I'm HIV- today. ~~[illegible]~~ The guy in question and I would collapse onto the bed like two beached whales and pass out. Then I met Will my first boyfriend, a handsome older man from the South (lovable to his ~~accent~~ and he loved me) who was a falling down drunk taxi driver (a scary thought in itself). I learned I could sleep with the same man night after night. The problem was he was impotent (because of the alcohol probably). We kissed and cuddled, fought horribly. My drinking got worse; I moved to Iowa to go to the prestigious Writers Workshop. There the unimaginable happened. I fell in love with a hungry young man ten years younger than I and we became lovers. He ~~[illegible]~~ was not a drunk. I was extremely possessive of my "prize" and very jealous. Not surprisingly he cheated on me. I was taken a hostage when he graduated and returned to look after his dying father I ~~returned~~ moved to

New York to try to save our rocky relationship. I began to make scenes with him in bars and restaurants. I got eighty-sixed out of one bar for molesting. (a straight woman had rightly complained to the management. I thought the management was prejudiced against disabled people. ~~and~~ I thought they had invented the story ~~etc~~ (I remember nothing of my behavior) in order to have a reason to throw me out. After one more horrendous evening my lover walked out on me, and did not return (I'm happy to say we're good friends today). I was in despair. My worst fears which I had worried in my childhood and early youth would be realized after all. Because I was gay, I was doomed to ~~live~~ be alone forever, fantasizing about men I could never have. The next day however I met a woman at a sidewalk cafe in Manhattan. ~~ted~~ I was a little drunk and told her about my sober alcoholic father and my horrendous childhood. She said she'd meet me for breakfast the next day. I begged off ~~the~~ ~~ne~~ the couch. I was horribly hung over. I met her for coffee later. She told me she was a recovering alcoholic and went to a support group in fact she was on her way to a meeting of the support group and would I like to go with her. To my amazement I ~~and~~ said "yes" and I haven't had a drink since. That was just over thirteen years ago. I say I came out when I came to San Francisco but I really believe I ~~came~~ out did not truly come out until I was sober. Not just sober but sober on stage! in Albany New York of all places. In 1990 a television producer heard me give a talk about my recovery from ~~the~~ alcoholism. He asked me if I'd ever done any acting. I felt a pang of sadness. No I said, but ~~[illegible]~~ I reckon I could. I flashed on the number of times I had gotten drunk in bars in the Castro and declaimed to my unfortunate "companion of the evening": "You know if I weren't disabled I would have been an actor." The response would often be (from friends too) "So be an actor," "How many parts

I'd reply

are there for people like me?", "So write your own part" they'd say. The T.V. producer said the same thing. When at Iowa I had written a book of poems in the voice of Achille Emperaire, a friend of the painter Paul Cezanne and whom Cezanne painted. ~~The~~ Emperaire was a deep persona for me. For a while I had a print of the portrait on my wall. I took a [illegible] piece. In New York, a friend had dreamed that I was on stage playing Achille, so I turned the book of poems into a play. The T.V. producer planned to make it into a video. I took acting lessons. I performed the one-man play in people's houses. A friend said he'd direct it. It became obvious that the piece was a stage piece rather than t.v. material. Since then I many have performed the piece ~~ame~~ at a number of colleges and theatres on the Eastern seaboard. As well as acting, I ~~have~~ ~~been~~ taught college in New York for ten years. ~~Two years~~ ~~My~~ ~~true~~ My "moment of pride" came after a performance of the play at Carlo gallery in Albany in 1991. I received a standing ovation from a mainly straight rather conservative looking audience. But it wasn't just the ovation that made me proud. It was the fact that, here I was a gay man, disabled, a minority within a minority within a minority, playing a gay disabled man in a play I'd written. I was myself on stage that night. People who've never acted often imagine that acting consists of learning how to "pretend" to be the ~~person~~ character really well; this is not the case. When you're "in the role," you ARE the person. Many of the experiences I "gave to Achille were my own (little is known of his actual life) — ~~he's~~ he is my alter ego if you like. He unlike me died (probably of drink) alone in a shack surrounded by his decaying paintings, a failure in his own eyes at least and certainly obscure. The moment I came off stage I was photographed. If ever I feel low or too sorry for myself, I look at that photo. It was the moment I felt most in touch with my own inner spirit, my true gay self, sober, happy, joyous and free

25
9
225
7
1575

in Sobriety

John Jay College
Person: Dr Cozzi
Action: Rudeness. Ignoring of the others for Promotion. Not
affected my self-esteem. felt belittled. made me lose determination to do a good job. made me angry

Dr Hellinze
Telling me I had to dances
Rudeness, unreasonable
~~other colleagues~~. demands - syllabus etc.
Harassing me after I told

other colleagues
Friends or foes encouraged me to seek promotion. Then [illegible] me. knew even with Cozzi I got goodies / promotions and [illegible]
my self-esteem

Fordham University
Prof Levy
Ed Rulon
Bill Tomkley.
Ro Miner
laughed at me when asked for promotion. refused at first - get no money for career. gave me nothing. then let me down and refused to support. made me angry and lethargic.

1995.

Aileen [illegible] me feel

Susan Carter scholar
1880 poems
ATTP.

Elegies Teaching
[illegible]
Felt belonging.
[illegible] Court
[illegible]
necessary [illegible].
New Words
response to [illegible]
Odeon.

~~Brinkley~~ Aileen makes me feel

Miller. Generous but
[illegible] to [illegible]
for money. Please
[illegible]. Ross
[illegible]

[illegible]
Less [illegible]
[illegible], No
[illegible] Understand

[illegible]

[illegible]	Action	Reaction Feel
Roxie Bell	Sexually [illegible]/[illegible] Harassment no charges	angry, betrayed
[illegible]	Refused job because of [illegible]	[illegible], created job for [illegible] [illegible]

New York

Gary Fox	[illegible] Room made me cheap, Anal, Rude Complains I hate him never [illegible], some [illegible] ([illegible] of N.)	angry,
Robin Waggoner	Promising money not coming thru	angry mad.
[illegible] Konrad	Refuses to [illegible] w/me.	unworthy

Character Defects

Procrastination
bills
record keeping
letters
phone calls,
vagueness

Sleeping around
[illegible] + off women.

Antagonism to ? authority
Colleagues. [illegible]
(AFV.)

Wimping around
attractive women
& authority figures

Assets.
Kind,
Loving
generous
Good teacher
Excellent Writer, Reviewer, editor, poet
Considerate, [illegible] friend.
Role in program.

Review: The Promise of Rest by Reynolds Price
(Scribner's, 1995)

This novel deals with effect of AIDS on a patrician Southern family. Wade Mayfield, a young architect now living in New York, is brought home to die surrounded by his estranged family. The central character is, however, not Wade himself, but Wade's father Hutchins Mayfield, poet-in-residence at Duke University. The author himself has suffered from a life-threatening illness - cancer of the spine for a number of years. When I heard that Price had written an "AIDS novel" I assumed it would be a moving piece in which the author identified with the suffering of the dying one. Instead Price focusses on the "suffering" of Hutchins and the family. However hard Price tries to make us feel for and like Hutch, he fails. Hutch comes across as pretentious and arrogant. He talks to his students like a narcissistic pedant and speaks like a character out of Henry James. When a graduate student comes for advice about his failing marriage and tells Hutch that sex has never been a problem in the marriage (these folks can't even call sex "sex," they call it "eros"!) Hutch

Love's Foolishness

1. I sit by the café window,
watching the men passing by and
I think: None of them is as
handsome
sexy
well-dressed
refined
intelligent
exciting
as you,
and yet only a few months ago,
one of them *was* you.

2. You ask me out on a date.
I get so excited I could die.
You don't call when you say you will,
I get so anxious I could die, and I think,
Is loving you worth all this trauma —
all these sleepless nights,
all this anxiety, pain,
grief, longing, turmoil
and devastating pain?
Then we make love
And I get my answer:

[illegible] man.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes
oh yes!

2. We make love and I think,
it can't get better than this.
then we make love again
and it's better than before.
Can there be bliss greater than bliss
ecstasy beyond ecstasy?
You're in love, say my friends.
It's too good to be true, I say,
No, say my friends,
it's good *and* it's true. Enjoy it!
"But--" I say, "But but but
"Enjoy it," they say. They know.
They are old hands at this,
I am new at it.
I've never done this before.
I'm fourteen all over again and I think.
"Will he call ~~again~~, will he, will he?"
Of course he does. He loves me (I think)

I was forty nine
before I realized
I was attractive to men.
I would hide in my wheelchair
and then, after a few drinks,
pursue, inappropriately,
those who weren't attracted
ignoring the ones who
were — those who smiled
at me, or winked or ruffled my hair.
Either I didn't see
it that way
they're just being nice to me
because of the chair I think.
How many ~~lovers~~, potential
lovers did I miss?
To hell with them,
I've got one now!

Before I met you,
I felt safe. I wasn't lonely,
I had my work, friends,
a social life.
Now I feel lonely as hell, and
safe only ~~except~~ when you told me
after making love
~~except~~ when at the movies
you hold my hand, so warm,
and so tight

Pretty Men, Fancy Dancers

In the Seventies we chased after them
the pretty men, the fancy dancers —
elusive, smiling, healthy (so we thought),
blond and bronzed, ~~bro~~ bearded and becapped,
Teasing us with smiles in the seduction of allies,
the blatant doorways ~~opening~~ of our youth.
Some we made love to even, in tender moments
of innocence, almost by ~~mistake~~ accident, on a
one-night stand but mostly it was
sex we were after, the orgasm that went
through the roof ~~of our lungs~~.
~~What happened to them?~~
We recognize a face
here or there in the Castro,
in the Village, balding now,
grey mustaches, hollow eyes
with worry or disease. Many
must be dead, as we are.
What do we look for now?
~~Rom~~ Candlelit dinner dates
marriages at city hall?
All I ever wanted was to be
held and told I was beautiful
by one special man.

But I was ignorant,
~~Me I, the two were~~ so
out of touch with touch
~~with ourselves~~, as if sex
were the answer to longing.
~~there is never an answer,~~
we ~~can only question ourselves.~~
~~Comfort ourselves.~~
~~We can say~~ "~~I was naive~~
I ~~was oppressed~~, I was in
and thought I was out
I was lonely ~~when~~ and thought
I was a star chasing the moon
on the milky way of lust.
~~Tell~~ me, Heal me Father, for I know not what I do
be kind to me ~~my~~ lover
and in time I'll ~~will~~ heal,
Touch me and I'll bloom
still young in middle age,
~~wandering~~, going about my life
so changed, wiser, ~~stronger~~,
prouder. Come after me boys
I am desirable. I may say
yes or No. I ~~may~~ will let
You know in time, when I find a home,
by letter or by phone.

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stages. I ~~too~~ was also typing that time and just laughed it off. "Such near misses" make me shudder now. Also in Iowa, I remember being carried up an icy slope by a husky Swedish farmer and praying to God, "Get me up this slope alive and I promise I'll never drink again." God or Fate or whatever or sheer luck, got me up the slope intact, so I didn't have to promise God anything and went on drinking.

Once in San Francisco, I had been drinking and crossed Market Street, the long main street ~~that~~ THAT traverses the whole city. I looked up and saw four sets of traffic lights. I closed one eye. "Oh, good," I thought "now there's only two sets." The next thing I knew, I heard a loud screech of tires and the slamming of a car door. A young man got out of his car, whose bumper was about an inch from my chair. He was white as a sheet. "I didn't see you," he said. Why should he have? The chair is black, and I had no reflectors or flags (as I have now) to make myself more visible. "Fucking San Francisco drivers," I yelled at him. In 1993 after having a stroke which took away my peripheral vision on the left side, I was hit by a car crossing West 82nd Street in Manhattan. The car seemed to come out of nowhere and I know I had right of way because I remember seeing the walk sign. Witnesses

not
Confirmed I was ~~nota~~t fault. The driver stopped and apologized. I was in shock so forgot to get his number. I did call an ambulance; result a badly sprained ~~right~~ left hand. Luckily my motorized chair is very heavy, so heavy in fact that it didn't tip over. It was this occurrence that finally convinced me of the necessity of having a flag on a pole attached to the chair at all times.

Once in New York City, it was raining in torrents. I went over what I thought was a ~~[illegible]~~ CURB CUT curb. The gutter was a river of muddy water. The gutter was about eight inches deep as I discovered as I plummeted FORWARDS forwards off the curb; result: a sprained left knee.

In 1989, just after the big Earthquake in San Francisco, I was on my way to visit friends in Berkeley. I was on the BART train. I had a heavy ~~[illegible]~~ backpack hanging on the back of the manual chair. The train took off with a jerk and I did a backwards somersault in the chair landing underneath it. The woman in the row nearest the seat, startled, helped me up. I checked into Alta Bates Medical Center; result, another sprained knee.

Twice when in school in Birmingham, I had miraculous escapes. Once I was being carried down a flight of stairs by my friend Pete (the poet Pete

Ncs loy). We had both been drinking but were not drunk. Pete missed his footing as we both hurtled forwards down the concrete steps and headed literally for a wall. Pete, a former Rugby football player, grabbed me as he would a football and sat down with a bump on the steps, result (to me) a bruise on my left side of my head and Pete was unharmed. Another time in Brighton my friend Andrew was pushing me in my manual chair. He was negotiating a curb when the chair tipped forward and I fell out of my chair (again I'd forgotten the seat belt) and landed on a pile of leaves; result: a sprained left knee. One time in New York, my friend the composer Dennis Riley was also getting me down a curb when the chair tipped forward. Luckily I had the ~~[illegible]~~ seat belt on; even so, I was flung forward and the next thing I knew I was ~~[illegible]~~ my face was inches from the curb. Result: unharmed, though naturally I was shaken, a bit shaky afterwards. I try not as much as possible to instruct friends and especially strangers, helping me as to how to push and carry me. It's a tricky problem. If I instruct them too much just ~~[illegible]~~ how fragile I am, they may get so nervous that they could drop me, tipping me and so on. At 69 I'm finally learning to be responsible for my fragile body and not to rely so much on "luck". ① I don't have too many lives left!

√

Billy Graham
Librarian

over the racetrack below and then caught a nauseating whiff of pig shit as a light hot breeze blew up from my right. Cheryl finally arrived on the scene. "Where are the other poets?" I asked her. "Oh they didn't show," she said cheerfully. "It's just you." "But I don't have enough poems to read for three hours." "You can always read the same ones," she said. "You know, in rotation. There's no audience." I said, "Don't worry, if we start reading they will come." Cheryl was not making an obscure reference to the raging hit movie "Field of Dreams" ("Build it and they will come") ~~an~~ as, note, the movie came out twelve years ~~after~~ later. So, wiping the sweat from my brow with a crumbled Kleenex I had fortunately remembered to bring with me, I began with a short introduction about the Venice Beach Poem and began to read to the empty field, or should I say, grassy slope. Two stanzas into the poem, I joyfully spied a group of people traipsing across my line of vision from left to right. They were probably done watching with the stock car racing (there was mercifully no race in progress right just then) and were headed for the exit. The group stopped and stared at me as I paused between stanzas. I looked at the group really over the top of my poem which

I held in my nervously shaking hand. There were about twenty of them. They stared at me in wonder like a herd of cows staring at a vagrant fox or a landlocked seagull. One man even wore a straw hat and had a straw dangling from his mouth. American Gothic lives I thought. A woman stepped toward me and bravely asked "What are you doing?" I was tempted to reply "Beats me" but I said truthfully "Reading poetry." "Oh," she said [illegible]. [illegible] my best incarnation of one of my most accessible poems (I think it was "Ellis Farm Station") the herd moved on slowly eyeing me suspiciously as they went. the now people on the dairy."

After I had read two more [illegible] to an empty field, competing modestly with the roar of the stock cars and the occasional pig's squeal, I gave up and Todd dug in his heels and he [illegible] no doubt but maybe I had reached that one woman who asked the question. Perhaps when next in the Mall in Roseville, she might pick out a copy of Shakespeare's sonnets which might change her life. Perhaps she would write a poem about a pig or a stock car or an ugly poet in a wheelchair she'd seen at the State Fair.

A slightly more encouraging event happened later that year (198 so high that ~~no one~~ even from a short distance no one could see them "doing it." They called it "going in the long grasses." Once, a singularly unattractive boy named Seldon whom I knew only as a pseudo-Oscar invited me to "go in the long grasses" with him. I blushed and declined. I was too embarrassed to reveal myself even in the long grasses, and I despised ~~my~~ their sniggering smutty attitude towards the wanking sessions.

For my first four years in grammar school I was obsessed with the Physics teacher, Mr. Byl (pronounced Bile). He was head of the small boarding house (there were forty boarders out of two hundred and forty boys) and greatly hated by the boys. They called him Vile Byl. He was ruthless and sadistic. Once because I had left my ruler behind he gave me zero in a test even though I had gotten all the answers correct. It puzzled me that I could yearn for such an unpleasant person, but I figured that since he was totally unavailable to me sexually in any case, that it didn't matter that I hated him. The point was that his image helped me achieve orgasm many a time when images of the boys didn't. The fact that he was so strict probably turned me on too. He represented power, strength, control, manliness. He dressed immaculately. I hoped he was a secret Oscar, but it turned out that a few years later he had a blatantly open affair with the mother of one of the boys, but for four years Mr. Byl preoccupied my sexual fantasy life. Then when I was in the Lower Fifth (age fifteen) I was love-struck. Two new teachers began work at the school — one taught German, the other physical education. On the first day of class in the fall of 1962 the two new teachers filed into morning assembly. one was tall thin and blond, one short and stocky with brown hair. I immediately hoped the ~~tall~~ short one was the German teacher as I planned to take German the following semester. I assumed that the tall one was the gym teacher probably because I associated height with strength and hoped that he was because I actually liked the short one better at first, It turned out that the tall one was was the German teacher, as the Headmaster told us as he introduced the ~~next~~ two ~~men~~ new men to us. The German teacher's name was Clapham. Next term I found myself sitting in the front row of the German class opposite Mr. C who, I had to admit had lovely blue eyes and a dazzling smile. His wavy hair was the colour of honey. He seemed gentle and sweet by nature, quite the opposite of Mr. Byl whom he was replacing as head of the boarders. With Mr. Byl gone, I would need a new obsession. I never expected it to be Mr. C. The more I looked into those smiling, watery blue eyes the harder I worked at my German. When he smiled at me, often praising my work for by now I was head of my class in every subject including German, I got this strange feeling just below my chest. It had nothing to do with sex, or so I thought. It puzzled me. What could it be? Soon I realised but never told anyone, that I had fallen in love. I was romantically obsessed with Mr. C for the next five years; in fact until I

Funny Things People Say

If you are in a wheelchair, (and this has been confirmed by friends and acquaintances of mine who also use this mode of transportation), the general (able-bodied) public seem to feel it is quite appropriate for them to come up to you in the street, the park, at a movie, on the bus or wherever ~~and say~~ make personal comments on your appearance, behavior and so on. It's as if for them the chair turns the person in it into an invulnerable insensitive object with no feelings, no reactive normal human qualities. Several times ushers in movie theatres have said to me when I am parked in an aisle: "You can't stay there, you're a fire hazard!" Whenever I am assaulted by such remarks I am shocked, amused and angered all at once. I always think of a witty reparte or a withering reply minutes, hours or even days later. For example one that comes to mind with the theatre usher would be "Well, I may be a flaming queen but I didn't think I was about to burn the house down!" The problem is that anyone who makes an insensitive remark or comment like this is not likely to ~~make~~ respond pleasantly or get ~~the~~ this kind of "joke" (especially if they are straight in a straight area). I must say that I have been the recipient of more rude and obnoxious comments from straight people rather than gay people perhaps because the latter identify more with someone else who is also a minority. I don't know. On the other hand I have been harrassed most by African American schoolkids and teenagers. One black kid about fifteen came up to me on Castro Street in the heart

The Salmon.

I know they're out there:
the pros, the fly-fishermen
with their decorated hooks
sooner or later my passion
will blind me to their trickery
and the hook will go in – sweet pain
of death, for these men don't throw you
back they keep you to eat – it's only
right: only amateurs throw back
the cold and shudder of the thought
of harming you. I respect ~~their~~ professional
unglamorousness. If fish caught men
I'd reel them in keep them fry
them and consume ~~with relish~~. They say
our flesh (when cooked) is tender pink
and sweet much as human flesh is raw.
Nowadays the doctors say eating us
deters heart disease in humans. I am
glad at least to keep a heart intact
if not my own. I leap high in escalation
for before I go I'll have my first glory,
I am young.

The Salmon

I know they're out there —
the pros, the fly-fishermen —
with their decorated hooks.
Sooner or later my passion will blind me
to their trickery and the hook will go
in — sweet pain of death; for those men
on the banks
don't throw you back; they keep you to eat —
~~the only right~~ and quite right too — after all only amateurs
throw you back and shudder at
the thought of harming you. If fish caught men,
we'd reel them in, keep them, fry them and
consume.
They say our flesh when cooked is pink and sweet
~~much~~ as human flesh is raw.
The doctors say that eating us deters
heart disease in humans. I'd like ~~am~~ glad
at least to keep one heart intact
if not my own.
I leap high in exaltation,
for I am young, ~~and before I go~~ Before I die,
and I will have my glory. I'll give one final
leap of exaltation

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Portrait: Gay Man and Mother, San Francisco
October 12th 1995.

they stroll hand in hand
like lovers down Castro Street.
She has an odd smile on her face
a cross between disgust and amusement,
as if she's thinking "Is it for this that
I changed his diapers, taught
him his table manners and how
to button his shirts?"
He walks close to her, one hand on her shoulder
past the [illegible] leather queens, lurking
with [illegible] outside Castro Station,
the [illegible] dirty queen
(Does ~~it matter~~ she guess it's a man?)
and the excitable young couples,
shaved heads and earrings hurrying
for a late session at Market Street gym.
He is doing the job his father
might have done - the protector
the ~~So~~ one who wishes one no harm
comes to Phyllis who grew up
in Sioux City Iowa, and for whom
the word "gay" in the meant cheerful, giggling
like wearing Easter Bonnets, unwrapping christening gifts,
at Christmas, dancing the polka
or the two step ~~at the dance~~ in the Episcopal Hall.

The Angel in the Garden

In my teens I spent ~~much of~~ most of my summer evenings ~~in the su~~ in the garden. I would play with my Dinky toys (toy cars and trucks) delivering imaginary people to imaginary destinations. Much of the time I would stare dreamily at the flowers, watch the children passing by in little groups on their way home. I would sing to myself. I had a nice boy ~~of~~ soprano voice. Several times neighbours called my mother up to ask ~~where the singing who was singing and who~~ where the singing was coming from. When she told them they would ask what the tunes were. "Oh, he makes them up as he goes along," "she'd tell them" One neighbour said "It sounds as if there were an angel in your garden." I made up symphonies, flute concertos, arias, imitating the music I heard on the 'Third' Program, the classical music station on BBC radio. In my next life I'd like to be a composer. I won't get to be one this time around, I'm too old to start a music degree but I try to sing through my poems, a voice heard somewhere in the garden of the world.

Tenacity

Living with a severe disability is tough. Up until my first stroke five years ago, I also lived with the fear of getting further disabling illnesses or disabilities, such as blindness, deafness and so on. With the stroke I actually acquired extra disabilities in addition to C.P.: severe weakness and numbness of the left side of my body, loss of peripheral vision on the left side and short term memory loss. Following the stroke, I experienced a "severe depressive episode with suicidal ideations" (the psychotherapist's description) which lasted eight months. Never before had I experienced such a feeling of despair. I became insomniac, "in love with my bed;" this depression is common after a stroke and caused partly by biochemical changes as a result of the trauma to the brain. I felt I would never come out of this "black hole." I don't remember ever being so depressed or feeling so crazy as this before, its possible that I had been in my drinking days but then at least I had my buddy and best friend, alcohol to numb the pain. I felt as if my life were over. Thanks to my therapy sessions and support groups, I didn't drink. Then a miracle happened. My friends have

Tenacity

Having had a seizure was absolutely the most terrifying, frightening experience of my [illegible] I also lived with the fear of getting further disabling illness or disability or blindness, deafness, and so on. With the [illegible] I certainly experienced another disability in addition to CP: weakness and clumsiness and numbness of the left side of my body, left peripheral loss of vision on the left side of [illegible] even memory loss. Following the stroke, I experienced "thalamic" [illegible] burning sensation in the muscles and skin ([illegible]) which lasted eight months. Never before had I been in such pain and a feeling of despair. I became very anxious, "what's wrong with my head;" the difference is some form of a stroke that caused both by hormonal changes and results of the trauma to the brain." If only I could have some of the "bad habits." I don't remember how long the depression or feeling of anger [illegible] to handle that I had been [illegible] treatment because I was [illegible] forever, attached to [illegible] the pain. I felt as if my life was over. Thanks to my strong desire and support of family, I didn't [illegible] - then a miracle happened! The brain has who is a landscape gardener here in the city, invites me for Christmas Week to stay with him and some friends in a cabin in the Sierra foothills. One of his friends and I took a liking to each other. We made fast and furious love to each other on the couch as Lorne was serving Christmas dinner. What an appetizer! I got a crush on the guy, his name is Wolf, but common-sense told me this was a "holiday fling" — he lives near the Mojave Desert, and at the time I was still teaching in Manhattan, but I got such a high from the experience that my depression never came back! They had tried me on Prozac and Zoloft but neither had worked for me. Suddenly I felt attractive again. My life wasn't over. I called the guy, ~~his name~~ is ~~Wolf~~, "Mr. Prozac". My depression has returned once but only mildly. After my second stroke last year, I was depressed again but this time I knew the signs, that it would pass. I am still "gun shy". Every flashing light I fear is an imminent seizure or stroke, but I go on. I have written this book. I still love my life. After the Wolf episode I realized that such an event would never happen to me in Manhattan. It wasn't just the fling, it was the possibility of it. ~~Here~~ California is a place of new experiences,

rejuvination. In '97 I had always wanted to come back home to California but after the '89 earthquake I became afraid to come back, using the quake as an excuse not to return. When I returned to Manhattan I became angrier and angrier. I was "let go" in my job at John Jay College suddenly, with no warning. My rent went up to $950 a month for one room. I woke up one day and thought "If I stay here I'll die." I prayed over the decision. It was hard to leave my dear friends. I still miss them but not the craziness, stress and expense of New York. I had some money in the bank. I moved — no job, no apartment but three friends still here from when I lived here twenty years ago. I persuaded my mother I was doing the right thing and I did do the right thing. Had I stayed in New York I know several things for sure: this book would never have been written, I would never have come out to my family and I would never have worked so on my health and diet. Friends warned me there were no teaching jobs, that it was almost as costly as Manhattan and so on. But I have tried always to

following my heart. Plus it made sense: the weather is less extreme and the city is much better equipped for someone in a wheelchair with kerb cuts everywhere, accessible free transportation and so on. I ~~have~~ found teaching jobs albeit part time. I ~~am~~ was writing; I was ~~am~~ making friends, putting down roots. I am not depressed. I ~~am~~ was sober; everything looked good. Then in '97, I had a grand mal seizure, a stroke, and broke my right hip, left femur and left ankle as a result, the doctors say, of my thrashing against the framework of the chair. Perhaps luckily (for my psychological health anyway) ~~the~~ neither the doctors nor ~~&~~ I were aware of the stroke at the time. We were so preoccupied managing the pain and ~~the~~ healing my bones that we attributed my slow rehabilitation to the breaks. It was only once I was up and about again in the chair again that I realised I was ~~am~~ now much weaker on the left side, my memory is worse. I am battling with depression again though not the deep dark abyss-like I had in 93. Now I am writing again teaching again, making new friends. Where did I get this tenacity?

This strength of spirit? I have to give my mother credit for always being my number one fan and "cheerleader." I hear her voice at the back of my head saying "You'll be alright. Go on, you can do it!"

But it's more than that. I love ~~my~~ life, my life: people, colors, sounds, the bustle of the city, beauty of the park, music at the symphony. I won't be deprived of any of it. When I came out the hospital this last time I felt so grateful just to be alive, to have all my senses intact, or most of them. If I had been born in Asia my parents would have probably killed me at birth. Instead I was treated as "normal." While it's true that my disability was "the white elephant in the living room" nobody talked about, "better this" than being overly pampered. I went to a regular grammar school, a regular university. Being treated as "regular" led, I think, to my coming to demand of life what other regular, similar middle-class people demand — a good education, a satisfying vocation, relationships, sex, friends and so on. It has never occurred to me (at least consciously) to settle

for second best just because I have O.I. I have always done what I wanted - at least in adult life, - to write, teach, ~~living~~ to live in an intellectually stimulating place. Until I got sober, I was driven by a strong will (I would have called it "determination" at the time). Now I don't feel driven by anything; as perhaps by some kind of higher power which I feel, guides my instincts so as to put me in the right place, hence my move to San Francisco in '94. Even when I was drinking my choices weren't all bad ones. I certainly made them impulsively and didn't plan ahead, this often got me into scrapes financially and emotionally. I have always thought of myself as an optimist, had the feeling everything would turn out alright. Never for a moment do I wish I hadn't been born. Ninety percent of the time I'm content to have brittle bones. There were moments of despair this last time in the hospital. Lying there in pain in a body cast, unable to sleep with the noises of demented old folks babbling in my ears, ~~that~~ there seemed no end to the struggle. I felt as if I would never get out of Laguna Honda Hospital.

7 妻

Since getting sober I have learned that feelings aren't facts. With the encouragement of my dear friends, most of them other recovering alcoholics and my psychotherapist, I pulled through. I am now living at home and have a wonderful caregiver, Terry, who lives in my building. Hope has returned. Never for a moment do I wish I hadn't been born. I often wish I didn't have OI, especially whenever I have a fracture. But the paradox is that though I am not my bones, not battle with them, yet they are dear to me. They are the flowers of my soul. I must care for them as one would a garden. Somehow my strength comes from them perhaps. My hands especially give me pleasure. People say they are beautiful; and indeed, they are too delicate ethereal looking, flowerlike in their way, a peasant's hands. One of them holds this pen. It presses the nib firmly on the paper; it writes on and on, with tenacity.

San Francisco
10/1/'04

Dearest Mum,

I'm so sorry I haven't written for so long: there are two reasons: firstly, because I was in bed for two weeks with bronchitis; secondly, because it has taken me a while to get my thoughts together to compose a suitable letter reflecting my conflicting feelings in response to your last two letters.

As to your first letter, I was disappointed and puzzled by your reaction to my book. I do understand that it's hard for someone of your generation to fully accept that not only is her son gay but wrote about it in a book, but I want to remind you of two things: first that modern day society does not condemn gayness as anything shameful or an illness or anything to be kept "under wraps" at all costs; furthermore remember that when I told you I was gay many years ago you told me "If being gay makes you happy, then it's fine with me.

what a relief and a blessing to me it was that you reacted that way. I was so afraid you would reject me or cut off all contact with me. I should have known that you were a better more loving person than to do such a thing. While we're at it one of the things I admire and value most in you is your motherliness, your ability to support me and others in whatever they do so long as it makes them happy. That's why your first letter was such a shock to me— so unlike you!

The pride you say you have in me I would now like to ask you to extend to the fact that I have now been able, thanks to lots of therapy and AA, to become finally my true self, to live openly and honestly as an adult gay man responsible for his own feelings, finances, sex life, career and

San Francisco

[illegible]

life in general. Imagine the agonies I went through at Hanley and Birmingham, pretending to be straight (or a-sexual) when all the time getting crushes on teachers and fellow students. Thank God I don't have to live "in the closet" any more!

In 85 when I came home, I told all my Birmingham friends I was gay. None of them was very surprised or "blamed" me for it even in those days. It's too bad I wasn't able to tell you then. By not doing so I did us both a disservice; but I was too afraid. I told myself you've already been through enough with the Granmas' death, Daddy's death and so on – that was only a rationalization on my part. I now live in the gay area of town near Henry S.C where I lived 76-79. It's so nice to be empowered by an environment that views gayness as the norm. Of course I also have straight friends

but since one out of four people in S.F. is gay (male or female), naturally most people I know and many my friends and acquaintances are gay. NYC is much more closeted than S.F. though in any artistic community you're bound to find gay people (such as dear Dennis who I miss so much. Dennis loves your paintings by the way, and loves you.

I focussed the book around the theme of gay love and romance so naturally it's the more self-conscious of anything I've written — It came about through the affair with the doctor, Allan, who by the way I am seeing again, and much more, happily as I am now able finally to take your advice and not make my whole sense of wellbeing depend on him. He's become a dear and sincere friend.

As to your serious letter, it is so beautiful and touching

to me that it brought tears to my eyes. All I can say in response is that most of the qualities you praise in me I value, I think, inherited from you.

I am also proud of you especially the courage with which you dealt with your current situation. It must have been a very hard transition from being autonomous living at home to being so dependent in the home. I do wish we could talk about all this on the phone, but it's so hard for you to hear it would be impossible. We'll just have to write more often.

I am proud to be your son. You are an abundant and powerful source of love which is, after all, all there is.

Much love Chris

to me that it brought tears
to my eyes. And [illegible] in
response [illegible] most of the
questions you raise in [illegible]
[illegible], which, unlike your
[illegible].

I am also proud of you
especially the courage with which
you dealt with your current
situation. It must have been
a big blow [illegible] my mom
your doctor how close [illegible]
[illegible] in the
[illegible]. As [illegible] we could tell
about all this on the phone, but
it's [illegible] for you, to bear
would be [illegible]. We
just have to write more often.

I am grateful to you [illegible].
You are an [illegible]
[illegible] of love which
is, after all, all there is.

Much love [illegible]

The San Francisco Marriott

Meeting Rules

1. Confidentiality.
2. Talking Stick
3. No blaming
4 Commitment to attendance.
5. Agenda Items to Kirby Wednesday.
6. Weekly announcements at meetings.
7 Free flow in case of emergency.
Get off your butt (t).

Submit agenda to Kevin

2 Weeks performance appraisal date — check board w/ employee and head.

Update on youth form by Tuesday — in box [illegible].

Job board
Notes initial on Name date
job board. Lows many
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How do they start.
open ended. What are your positions here?
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What new positions have you created based on your experience

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ER.

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misdemeanors.
Interest Construction Janitor (school)
Shelby Tilles
abilities Food Service, [illegible],
Angel (bilingual) Phone-Clerical
- receptionist collating mail.
Josh Yao Ream: Relitas
Clerical Word Processing.
Rosie Hector.
Bilingual. Shy Probs. Needs
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Why I Grew A Beard

If you knew me well, you would know the most obvious explanation is that I hate shaving and that I like the way beards look. If you knew me very well, you would have learned by now the reason is much more surprising, not to say shocking and humorous: I grew a beard to deter my professors and fellow students at U.C. Davis from mistaking for a woman.

Now let me make it plain right away that I am not an effeminate gay man nor do I have a high-pitched voice. It's true that I do have a very prominent chest bone, (a result of my brittle bone condition), but it in no way resembles a woman's breasts, and despite my long curly hair (this was 1976) I had never been mistaken for a woman before.

I first discovered Professor Hicks' mis-apprehension one evening in my dorm. I spotted him in the cafeteria having dinner with the novelist, Herb Gold, who came up to Davis once a week to teach a class in the Modern American Novel which I was interested in taking. I was already enrolled in Hicks' course on avant-garde fiction ~~or~~ and had submitted some poems to Hicks as the required application to get into his

From that day on I have never shaved. I have grown a full beard of which I am rather proud and I have never been mistaken for a woman since.

Tenacity

Living with severe disability is tough; up until my first stroke five years ago, I also lived with the fear of even further disabling illnesses or disabilities such as blindness, deafness and so on; then I actually got several new disabilities as the result of the stroke: loss of peripheral vision on both sides, severe weakness of the left side and short ~~time~~ term memory loss. Despite these, I went back to teaching and leading a normal life. The memory loss did interfere with the teaching: at first, I gave back the wrong papers to students, forgot their names frequently. This was before I learned compensatory ~~techniques~~ techniques for helping me remember (mostly taken from Dr. Christine Happ's invaluable book, *Don't Forget!*). As far as the students were concerned, I got away with it, "I think, because they thought of me as just another "absent-minded professor" (besides I was a *poet* and you know how *they* are!). I still got good evaluations, but my deputy head of department would prowl up and

down the corridor outside the room in which I was teaching to make sure I "got there on time and left on time". I recognize this now as harassment and probably had grounds to sue had I realized this).

So in '93 I bounced back in my usual then fashion despite a severe bout of suicidal depression, after the stroke, lasting eight months. I didn't drink. I came back. I moved to California. Then in '97 I suffered a grand mal seizure, a second stroke and broke my left ankle and femur and my right hip as a result of my violent thrashings against the frame of my chair. I am now teaching again. My short term memory loss is worse. The weakness on my left side is much worse. I came back. I go on. I have battled with depression yet again and also almost constant obsession with and, fear ideations ~~about~~ (as I call them) about my health. I am severely "gun shy" now. Every flashing light I see I fear is ~~anoth~~ the onset of another seizure or stroke. but I came back I go on. I am teaching again.

Where did I get this tenacity? this strength of spirit? I have to give my mother credit for always being my number-one fan and cheerleader. I hear her voice at the back of my head saying "Go on, you can do it!"

But it's more than that. I love life, my life. I love people, colors sounds, the bustle of the city, the beauty of the park, of music at the symphony. I won't be denied all of it. When I came out the hospital this last time I felt so grateful just to be alive, having my senses or most of them. If I had been born in Asia, my parents would have killed me at birth. Instead I was treated as if I were physically "normal." While its true that my disability was the "white elephant in the living-room nobody ever talked about," better this than my being overly ~~[illegible]~~ Pampered. I went to a regular grammar school, a regular university. Being treated as "regular" led in part to my demanding of life what

~~any~~ regular, smart, middle-class people demand — a good education, a satisfying vocation and so on. It has never occurred to me ~~to the best~~ (consciously) to settle for second best. I have always done what I wanted. Until I got sober, I was driven by a strong will (I would have called it "determination" at the time). Now I don't feel driven by anything; I feel led, perhaps, by a higher power which guides my instincts to put me in the right place, hence my move to San Francisco four years ago. I have always thought of myself as an optimist always had the feeling that things would be alright. And they always were, in the long run. Never for a moment do I wish I'd never been born. I often wish I didn't have O.I. I could have done without all the pain and frustration it has caused me, but it's part of me. But I am not my bones, not brittle as a person. I am as my friend in New York, Dennis Riley says, a "tough cookie," Now though I prefer to think of myself as a "gentle cookie" (a "soft cookie?") with tenacity.

Gossiping – talking about the [illegible] become gossip when Rationalizing the friends and acquaintances. No longer to knives or backbiting.. Willing to admit own part in defeats which provoke anger & criticism..

Self-pity – substitute for crying and feeling pain of loss the major [illegible] [illegible]..

Family

1 Father (abuse)
2 Mother
4 Grandmother
5 Aunt Hazel - [illegible]
3 Uncle [illegible]

Lovers

Allan 1
Richard 2
Walter 3

Sixth Step

Program People

Brad Krasnow
Denise
Michelle Collins
Andy Thomas
Bill Russo

Resentments - writers

Writers Nora Ephron
Nina Cassian
Michael Cunningham
Norris F [illegible]
Chris [illegible]
Thom Gunn

Robert Hass
Ted Hughes
Pete Townsend,
Bob Shacochis
Janet Desaulniers
Marjorie Chin
Michael Lassell

Teachers

Grad school
Josh Hirsch
Elliot Gilbert
Seamus Heaney
Larry Levis, Bob Gordon

Colleagues Coworkers
Dennis Riley Art
Andy Rogers Keller
Jed Dutler

Undergrad
Louis Lodge
John Hathaway
Thom Gunn.

Companions
Jan Speck 2
Terry Beasy 1
José Quintana 4
Kent Williams 3

High School Mr Powley
John Chapman
Mr Nichols.
Mr Gilchrist (?)
Mr Cross.

Doctors etc. Dr Delgado (3) Dr Clarke (WR1)

1 [illegible] at Worcester Royal 1949
2 Bill Kerry (physical therapist)
3 4 Nurses at Laguna Honda
" " SF. General (5D)
2 ~~Laguna Honda~~

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Badmouthing successful writers make me feel I just been written and somehow belittle their success. It [illegible] their otherwise [illegible].

Same for successful writer I'm envious of or jealous.

Badmouthing old profs somehow makes up for my not standing up to them or respecting them when I was their students.

Badmouthing father ~~gives him me~~ makes me feel good? (I think) i.e. look what I overcame — I got through all this — didn't I do well despite the old incest etc?

Identify recently mother's grandmother [illegible] praying then alternates guilt for not having asked more for what I wanted from them at the time.

Recovery group - get over symptoms - see above,

Complaining - C.D. - about Stones - [illegible] trip — was I a mess for putting up w/them?

[illegible] Rogs Stone — human [illegible] Rain of [illegible] in dry a [illegible] — why [illegible] others.

Hating Rivers, [illegible] - Contra
Couples, contra dances - curves
rain of poverty - rebels or relationship -

Cover - Backward Glance

5 years ago - had not begun
autobiography, had not organized
poems into 2 W [illegible] or written new
ones to complete work.
I had not written my poems
from heart only the head.

C.D. Hitting problems - 94 s has them -
Under them into [illegible] of
really doing & have no - fear of
being visible as a disabled person?
Shame for being different i.e. lifeless?

---

10 years ago worked in May - distractions as
writer acted? attempts to make it as actor
to avoid facing competition in writing field?.
Pursuing distractions - C.D.

Jealousy – real or imagined – have made it worse. Admission [illegible]ment of achievement compensates for (what I feel) lack of achievement in other areas (career etc)

Self-pity – poor lonely sufferer – F.E.A.R.
Self-indulgence – eat in excess & [illegible] around in it.
Hypochondria – illness as substitute for attention – attention gotten from Mother as child. Need for comfort that Mother gave come from H.P.

Resentment – [illegible]
John Schmidt – modern Gordon – mgr
Buddy " "

The Madman

raves on the sidewalk
barking his foul invective
at the air.

I give him a wide berth:
he might knock me down
or just collide with me
on his mad mission to
trample down the world.

He has the looks of a crazy Jesus;
he might have been handsome
with a different brain.

Perhaps there was a time once,
long ago when, like me,
he knotted his tie and smiled
at himself in the mirror
in preparation for a date.
He always wears a jacket:
in summer, grey linen
soiled and oily
lining hanging down
a foot below,
in winter Harris tweed
frayed and pockmarked
with cigarette burns,
both jackets snug in fit

and almost sexy on him.

I wish that, Samantha-like
I could twitch my nose
and give him a ~~different~~ ~~same~~ serene mind
sane as sweet.

Soon he would be sunning himself
on a bench in Beaver Street Park
feeding breadcrumbs to the sparrows
Children would come and climb
on his knees and play with his beard,
grown-ups stop and say
"How are you?" and even the long,
breeze, which he has abused for so long
would take time to stop by
and caress with its lover's fingers
his long dark curls.

The Oldman

raves on the sidewalk
barking his foul invective
at the air

I give him a wide berth; he might
knock me down or ~~[illegible]~~ with him
on his mad mission to trumpet
the World.

He has the looks of a ~~mad~~ crazy Jesus;
he might be handsome with a different brain.
Quick that, Samantha-like
I could twitch my nose and give him
a new sane mind.

Soon he would be sunning himself
on a bench in Bleake Street Park,
feeding ~~the sparrows~~ bread crumbs
to the sparrows. Children would
climb on his knees, play with his beard,
grown-ups stop to say "How are you?"
and even the breeze
(he has been alone for so long)
would take time
to caress with its loving fingers
his long dark curls.

Brian [illegible]

The madman rambles on the sidewalk, looking his [illegible] [illegible] at the air.

I gave him a little bath. He might sketch you, me or just [illegible] with me on his most mission to trample the hostile world.

~~I will tho~~

He has the looks of a crazy Jesus, would be wondrous of well a different brain.

I [illegible] 5 months — i'd I can't hold my legs and give him a [illegible] meal soon he'd be drumming on a bench in Riverside Park. Leading the sparrows.

Children would [illegible] at his knees. Even grown-ups would stop to hug him.

Every [illegible] which he has almost [illegible] long

probably unable to stop living and [illegible] the long death [illegible] with its [illegible] [illegible]

Perhaps there came a time once
long ago when he let me
he brushes his teeth and smiles
at himself in the mirror
in preparation for a date.
he always wears a jacket -
grey linen or summer -
[illegible] and ashy
long baggy sleeves or just below,
in white florsheims [illegible]
[illegible] with cigarette burns -
both pockets hung in jet and
almost sexy as him.

4th Step

Resentments: against anyone w/ more money.
esp. yuppies downtown 9-5 ers
1A. People who go shopping on sidewalk (sidewalk [illegible])
1B Poets/peers/fellow graduates w/ books out.
2. Same as above w/ full-time professorships
3. Guys having prominence etc.
4. All drivers esp those in BMW, Mercedes, Audis
5. Any guy w/ a girlfriend.

What I get out of resenting the above:

Compensatory superiority - I can say -
1 Well I'm a better poet anyway.
2. They're all air-heads.
3. They're robots - morons - no spiritual values.
4. Any guy with a steady girlfriend is unhappy really

Character defects
1. anger - at unknown people who never suffer the same wrong thing I do
2. Critical put down attitude - people's dress, hairdos etc. - bad taste in cars, homes and material possessions

What I get out of criticism of others

Feeling of superiority.

Origins of anger and criticism

feeling of having deprived, not inferior
I can't have what I want so why
should others get what they have.

The Lifting Team

Recently in the hospital
in great pain from ~~[illegible]~~
broken limbs after an auto accident,
I had to be lifted — from bed
to gurney ~~from~~ gurney
to X-ray table (brutally hard)
Each time they sent for the lifting Team.

The lifting Team ~~team~~ is Solomon —
football player build with a wide smile
and tenor voice — mellow, golden, rolling [illegible].
Each time he lifted me
~~[illegible] my broken bones~~,
I never felt the slightest
pain ~~when they lifted me~~.
Each time Solomon [illegible]
says ~~[illegible]~~ the [illegible] [illegible])
"Don't worry I you'll be alright."

When in death's last delirium
I shall call for the lifting team
Who will come as angels and Solomon will say "Don't worry
you'll be always and by [illegible] catching my ghastly nosedive into Hell
and lifting me up, high up into
the fields of stars.

Armistead Maupin's first became known for his ~~acclaimed and~~ hugely depicting life in San Francisco in the 70s popular column "Tales of the City" in the San Francisco Chronicle. Out of the columns grew his widely acclaimed series of Novels Tales of the City which he adapted for television and which was subsequently shown as a mini-series on PBS. The sequel to this set of novels, More Tales of the City ~~too~~ has also adapted for the T.V and began showing as a mini series on Showtime ~~this~~ June 6-7. ~~His~~ ~~The~~ His characters he created who live on "Barbary Lane" ~~a fictional street~~ ~~and~~ have become beloved by readers and viewers alike and represent the diversity melted of San Francisco's Society, the dwellers live on Barbary Lane. "archetypal San Francisco street which ~~the lane~~ is a ~~microcosm of of typical San Francisco of the seventies~~ and eighties. Like the city itself welcomes all manner of folk who learn to live in harmony no matter what gender or sexual preferences.

and no doubt this is the reason for their superb blending, ~~and~~ unique tone and precision of timing. ~~The only~~

The only jarring note of the evening was the music to which Steven Petronio danced — "Dance music for Borneo Horns" by Henry Brant — a blaring piece for what sounded like wrangling saxophones accompanied by bongos. Mr. Petronio appeared naked to the waist and without once moving his legs proceeded to caress his own torso and shaved head with a kind of erotic self-loathing. Next ~~two~~ time, Steve, show us what your lovely legs were made for!

Nevertheless this performance, jarring as it may have been in terms of the rest of the evening, has remained with me. Mr. Petronio is a powerful and obviously innovative performer.

Because I was asked to review this concert, I got in free, but even if I had paid the $150 (which included a reception and superb hors d'oeuvres, I would have

Though my blood pressure recorded it mightily
your news that you'd sero-converted
I thought, overall, I'd taken quite lightly
Though I was angry at first
~~tattooed~~ risked your
That you'd ~~been so dumb~~ ~~had~~ unsafe sex so lightly
had unsafe sex or risked your life so lightly
or to have ~~sex with~~ unprotected sex
with ~~them~~ ~~your lover who had~~ AIDS so lightly
on with AIDS so

that
Though I was furious you'd had unsafe sex
and risked your life so lightly
I

At first I was mad you'd risked your life so lightly
And ~~then~~ wrote ~~a cutting~~ you a calm letter [illegible] over [illegible] without letting anger [illegible] mask
Though my blood pressure recorded it mightily

that had
At first I was mad you'd risked your life so lightly
you too
but ~~I~~ wrote over-calmly and no anger blurted
Though my blood pressure recorded it mightily

what we can't say
We English don't feel ~~or express~~ it politely
~~and~~ ~~words~~ that must
and whatever ~~So whatever~~ bad news ~~we~~ ~~receive~~ can't be averted
think
we thought overall we'd taken quite lightly
We'll take it

Out of the hospital

I'd forgotten how small the children are, they are miniature adults - perfectly proportioned; even their heads are smaller than grown-ups. This seems strange to me, not having seen any children for seven months - I suppose "able-bodied" folks experience in seeing me for the first time. And I am not perfectly proportioned. My body is about the size of a regular five year old; my head the head of large adult; And but I'm not a Dwarf. I have long slender arms, strong arms, biceps, triceps I've developed from all the years of pushing a manual chair, transferring from chair to bed, chair to toilet and so on. Then the my muscles. My breast bone sticks out like a chicken's. Some people think it's a metal contraption attached to my torso. What's this?" men and even women have asked and prodded it as you

would a piece of fruit at a market to see if it is ripe. I'm quite self conscious about my chest, more so than my size of which I am only aware when I catch sight of myself in a mirror along with an able-bodied person. If I see myself in a mirror alone I don't see "small person," bearded child. I see an adult handsome man. I'm no longer afraid to look at myself. Ever since I saw myself on video a few years ago in New York when I was MC-ing a musical event organized by a friend of mine and he said "you look so handsome." I had to agree. I thought I'd go out with him he's cute. Ever since then I've realized I have the power to attract ~~[illegible]~~ I'm like a small dog that doesn't know the difference between his size

and that of the large dog
I'm attracted to. Of course
I have to brace myself for
the man's shock when he sees
me, But here in San Francisco
there's less prejudice with
regards to size dogs and since
the gay scene is very young
here and of course I'm not your
average stud like I'm not
attracted to the average kind
the boys whose hair the shave
heads. I think facial hair is
sexy - why cut it off.
Chest hair is sexy. Not really
long hair. Perhaps I take a
lot of young men I'm looking
for myself - is this narcissistic? Are
we making love to ourselves or
loving ourselves. Perhaps both -
In general though I like big men
with facial hair - all my lovers
were looked this way

SF. 1/2/98

Dear Norah,

Here's my letter at last. It is still hard for me to write as I can't yet lean over a table and have to hold the paper (in this case a notebook) up in my left hand rather like Moses and the tablets! Sorry about your trauma in the lift. I once got stuck for half an hour in the Arts Faculty at B'ham with my history professor and it was very awkward as neither of us could think of a thing to say. Your driving "method" with Uncle Bill sounds awfully perilous but needs must when the Devil "drives" except that Uncle Bill is the very opposite of the Devil (but you get my drift). I can now be up and about all day with no pain. I'm having a very hard time finding reliable caregivers – a new one every week and no luck so far.

In Early Spring
(after Constance Urdang)

If the guests of winter
refuse to answer
as the sun lifts its ~~sleeping~~
blooming head from a nest
of clouds,
if violets peek with shy courage
from behind their fences
of heart-shaped leaves,
if pigeons strut on the window
sills of Rod of America,
if you've already broken
all your new year's resolutions
then it's early spring,
there's hope now
the warmth will encourage
us to look for love
within ourselves
just because
today is a new freedom
from the longing for
the impossible —
the impossible is already here

Coming Out

Kn

It was easier
and stranger than I'd thought,
I took a deep breath
picked up the phone,
Mom I said
I called because
I wanted you to know
I'm in a relationship
with a man.
"What about a man?"
(she was joking)
I'm dating a man
"Oh, a *man*" she roars.
"Well *that* doesn't surprise me."
He's a doctor, grad and Jewish,
(Isn't this every mother's dream?
Even if he is really I believe
a convert to Judaism.
"Is he rich?" "No, ah,
Maybe he can keep you out
I doubt it Dray!
Knowing how cheap he is)

Then we began our
usual conversation about
the weather and hung up.

A day later I got
a message on my voicemail
"I just wanted you to know"
he says, in hushed tones,
That if being gay makes you
happy, it's fine with me.
I possibly knew he's been told
my friends already
he would take it well.
I wish I hadn't waited thirty
years before I told her.
Since the conversation we've
grown closer. We already
say "I love you (unless
of being the first person to
bridle) and we even a

Bob: is this dreadful or brilliant?! I think it might be the first of a new book on flowers!

Ode To the Violet

By your scent I find you,
so shyly ~~shyly hiding~~ in the hedgerow,
as you hide safe from fox's paw and foot of crow,
by human eyes so rarely seen —
a sapphire chip with purple gleam.

In a book ~~of~~ on flowers
wherein each flower
is given like the Book of Hours
some verse or painting of an angel choir
beside your name but a leaf outline,
no painting but two lines of prose —
fitting in a way I suppose;
not for you the bragging of the rose
or sentimental verses on the lily;
you're not, nor ever will be, one of those
who flaunts herself quite silly;
only by a delicate fragrance you appear
and some speak of you as queer =
the gay color so subdued
as a gay child who too well knows
its love's considered rude
like the hatching of a newborn calf:
Fear not, sweet violet, I speak up on your behalf.

This Thing
Friday Night, Castro Street, San Francisco

They are getting ready —
the last minute pulling out of keys,
tucking in of hankies
a ruffle of chains,
sex unlocked for a wild night
ahead. Already some are dark
staring glazedly from a bar window
or tripping with queenly precious
in high heels, a toss of wig and
'bitch' over the shoulder at a smiling
bearded type, chewing on his cigar.
We all plan to score tonight.
It's not love we want but
validation that we are
after all, hot, successful
at this thing called ~~gay~~ freedom.
the hope
I'm convinced of it.
they're all going home
with lovers tonight
except me.
They seem so confident.
They've got it down.

Depression in Winter

There comes a little space between the south
side of a boulder
and the snow that fills the woods around it.
Sun heats the stone, reveals
a crescent of bare ground: brown ferns,
and tufts of needles like red hair,
acorns, a patch of moss, bright green....

I sank with every step up to my knees,
throwing myself forward with a violence
of effort, greedy for unhappiness –
until by accident I found the stone,
with its secret porch of heat and light,
where something small could luxuriate, then
turned back down my path, chastened and calm.

Bright Sun after Heavy Snow

A ledge of ice slides from the eaves,
piercing the crusted drift. Astonishing
how even a little violence
eases the mind.

In this extreme state of light
everything seems flawed: the streaked
pane, the forced bulbs on the sill
that refuse to bloom.... A wad of dust
rolls like a desert weed
over the drafty floor.

Again I recall a neighbor's
small affront – it rises in my mind
like the huge banks of snow along the road:
the plow, passing up and down all day,
pushes them higher and higher....

The shadow of smoke rising from the chimney
moves abruptly over the yard.
The clothesline rises in the wind. One
wooden pin is left, solitary as a finger;
it, too, rises and falls.

The Middle Heart

I'm in Love.
It's a sickness, truly.
I'm obsessed. I want
to see him all the time
Call him all the time.
He feels trapped and no wonder.
So I've planned a strategy.
I cultivate the middle heart
I busy myself with friends
(Whether I want to or not)
Even date others occasionally
(even if I'm bored)
I play it cool.
It works.
Now he calls me.
He loves me, I him.
I act sane.
All those romantic excesses
– the wooing the pining
the fear of his leaving
I tell to be gone.
He doesn't leave.
We make love and despite
the ecstasy still the middle heart
prevails.
I am consistent
affectionate
loving
but not wild
with passion.
Is this self-control
maturity or another
kind of madness.

The Middle Heart

I am in love, lovesick for you

~~ote~~
but this time
~~This man~~ I dont want to love you by
you your
with my needs ~~or~~ running away. ~~It~~ ~~He's~~ worth the
self restraint. The small acts of
love – the corsage ~~of~~ the flower
are
the touch, ~~these~~ tokens of the middle heart are
~~are~~ enough this spring.
I am curing myself of limerance
Slowly deciding building trust
slowly entrusting you,
despite my oldness;
we meet each other halfway
in the middle heart
which exchanges
intensity for calmness,
hysteria for passion,
wild parties for counting the days
we're still together.

Love's Foolishness

1. I sit by the cafe window
as unnoticed I ~~and~~ watch the men pass by and
I think none of them is
as handsome
as intelligent
as articulate
as sexy
or as well dressed
as you,
yet only six months ago
one of them *was* you.

2. Yesterday because you hadn't called
by three, I thought I'd die of anxiety;
then today you called and asked me on a date,
and now I think I will die of anxiety

3. Is it ~~it~~ really worth all this pain
longing, anxiety, all these sleepless nights
just so I can make love to you like this?
Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes,
Oh, Yes!

Consolation
All men are pigs
They only want one thing.
Thank god.

Why whenever I arrange to meet you
for a date do I think you'll never come?
~~Every~~ You always do; you always have.
~~Yes~~ Then you arrive. We kiss.
And I feel so foolish,
~~and~~ so relieved
you cannot read my mind

Chris Hewitt

To: Joseph at Desktop

Under "Acknowledgements" insert
between poems published in the *Laurel Review*
and the '*Observer* Int'l *Poetry Competition Anthology*':
New York Native: "Chicken Soup," "Gentleness,"
"Home," "Midnight Serenade," "Rain," "The Sparrow."
Also, insert poems published in the *New Yorker* after
poems published in the *New York Native*
followed by poem published in *Observer Anthology*
and add "Hypochondria" Two poems published
in *Salmagundi*.

Add "Timing" to poems in *James White Review*.

Sinatra a long illness in hospital.

I dreamt I saw
Sinatra, long white
hair in modern clothes,
crossing a ploughed
field, crying.
He had a younger man
with him, making sure
he didn't fall, guiding
his way, but [illegible] pushed him
aside, and switched directions,
and began to cross a
new longer field,
so many furrows
to negotiate,
and still a long to [illegible]

What Reality

Our paths cross about once a year —
in a lobby, a Green Room, a train station.
Flustered by mutual attraction,
We are blushing and shy
as teenagers.
~~No romance~~ We'll never be involved
(we both have commitments elsewhere)
but always, for days after we meet,
in my heart's eye, I kiss with you the perfect
kiss, under ~~the~~ a dome of stars
Somewhere in West England
on a ~~frosty~~ winter's night,
We are consumed
with mutual consummation
We stop time.
~~we have ten seconds of eternity~~.
~~And~~ the beauty of it is
I can have you for as often
and ~~for~~ as long as I like:
What reality is better than this?

GLC 67
Hewitt

Poetry and prose drafts, 1995-2004, undated #2 of 2

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